

WITH QUEEN'S ARMY

GEN. SIR EVELYN WOOD WRITES OF TOMMY ATKINS.

CHANGES DURING VICTORIA'S REIGN.

Only Ten Years of Peace in That

Time—Life in a British Battalion—

How the British Soldier Really

Fares.

(Correspondence of the Dispatch.)

LONDON, May 27.—During the sixty years Queen Victoria has reigned, exclusive of the charter and other trading companies, the British army has fought in great or small expeditions for fifty years, leaving ten years only of absolute peace.

In 1852 we had not battalions, but we had no generals trained and practiced in the duties of that rank; for as soon as a colonel was promoted he was placed on half pay, and was very seldom employed afterwards. There was no staff, known as such, no field commissariat, ambulance corps, nor transport. There was no general qualified to handle more than one arm—i. e., the cavalry or infantry—while the artillery was kept as distinct from the rest of the army as if it had been a separate profession. The army was in this stage when England drifted into a war with Russia, of which the only recollection to be recalled with thorough satisfaction is that our soldiers gave to all times an enduring example of the highest form of discipline. Forty per centum of those who served before Sebastopol, in the depth of the winter of 1854-55, rest on the spires of the Crimea, or in the Scutary Cemetery, at Constantinople. These heroic men, who were destroyed by unnecessary and preventable privations, exposure, disease, and undue exertion, never gave in, and they died without even a murmur.

In spite of our losses, however, when peace ensued in 1856, England stood in a better position for war than two years previously, when the great struggle commenced. The 25,000 men who were disembarked in the Crimea in September, 1854, had practically all disappeared, but they had been replaced by another 25,000, with thirty-six field-artillery, or twelve batteries, and the same number of horse-artillery, or six batteries. It is strange how the indelible memories were still fresh in the public mind—even before the treaty of peace was signed—the Cabinet was considering what retrenchments could be made in the army and navy, and it was in these days no British Cabinet, so far as I know, had ever understood war, and that our expenditure was at the time about £100,000 sterling a year, but the misfortune was, we commenced to reduce the army without considering what the military policy of the country was to be.

In 1857 our hospital arrangements were as unsatisfactory as those which I have described in regard to the regimental system. In practice, at all events, nothing beyond a bare diet and medicine was allowed for the sick, all the articles necessary for medical treatment being obtained at all at the expense of the officers. One good result springing from the sufferings of our soldiers in the Crimea was the increased attention given to the care of sick and wounded men, furthered in a marked degree by the exertions of women. Miss Nightingale and the ladies who accompanied her to the East, did great service in ameliorating the position of the soldier when in hospital. In March, 1858, the Queen, after a visit to the sick and wounded at Chatham, while eulogizing the attention paid to men in hospital, added: "The windows being so high, no one could look out of them, and that the wards are like prisons." The immediate result of the interest evoked was the erection of the great military hospital at Netley, and, somewhat later, the Herbert Hospital at Woodwich.

The same influences brought about the acquisition of the land on which Aldershot Camp now stands, and many other important changes in the army. During a visit to the troops collected in Aldershot Camp in the summer of 1856, the Queen pointed out that she had that day seen regiments which, after eighteen years' foreign service in a trying climate, had spent but seven months in England, when they had been dispatched to the Crimea, and then, after but one year at home, had been put under orders for India, where, at that time, the tour of service was for twenty years.

SEIPOY REVOLT.

Immediately following the return of our troops from the Crimea came the revolt of the Sepoys, beginning in the spring of 1857, which was not put down for two years, during which the British soldiers and the East India Company's soldiers performed a succession of heroic deeds. Two years after the excitement of some senior officers in the French army, consequent on the attempt made by Orsini on the French Emperor's life, an attempt which was arranged in London, gave rise to the fear of invasion, the result of which has been the formation of an auxiliary army of 250,000 volunteers, which

has grown steadily in numbers, and of which the present date. In the Imperial troops were withdrawn from our larger Colonies, and ten years later there was a further concentration, it being recognized that Imperial garrisons are to be maintained only at certain coaling stations, head to enable the navy to protect our mercantile fleets.

In 1871 Mr. Cardwell, then Secretary of State for War, carried out the abolition for purchase in the army. In that system, bad and unjust as it was, there was good point, the principal one being that it secured a rapid flow of promotion, though this was obtained at the expense of the individual officer. Under the new system the State has had to take over that charge, to the enormous increase of the non-effective vote; but on the other hand, it was abolished that quasi-right of ownership in a commission which existed, and while it lasted, rendered difficult the practice of selection, to which we have only just now come. Thirty-nine years after it was suggested by the Queen to Palmerston, and a quarter of a century after the country paid the price of Mr. Cardwell's great reform!

The hardships of the purchase system were exemplified in 1812 in the battalion, the unwritten history of which I quoted in the earlier sentences of this paper, when a young lieutenant-colonel of the guards was permitted to exchange with the lieutenant-colonel of the battalion, in spite of the fact that the senior-major had nearly forty years' service, had been in several actions in the Peninsula, was engaged at Waterloo, and whose name was recorded for purchase, but who was unable to give the over-regulation price of the lieutenant-colonelcy. The great gain, however, from the abolition of purchase lies in the fact that officers, now being professional soldiers, have much more influence over their men than formerly. The duty of instructing the non-commissioned officers and privates has rendered my brethren more alive to their serious responsibilities, and has enabled them to obtain a greater knowledge of the feelings actuating their comrades in the ranks.

The young soldier of to-day, on joining, is in a very different position from that of his predecessor sixty years ago. He is supplied with a complete outfit of clothing, and a kit containing all such necessities as brushes, combs, razors, etc. He is supplied periodically, later, with the principal articles of his uniform without charge; but he is to keep up the necessities, which, under the old system, were his own responsibility, underclothing, at his own expense, and it is in wear. He pays for groceries, vegetables, and personal washing, the cost of which varies now from 3d. to 4d. per diem, his bedding is washed by the government.

It is a fair estimate to put a soldier's rations, pay, lodging, and clothing as equivalent to 15s. a week, which sum increases gradually, according to the soldier's conduct, and consequent promotion. He is credited also with a sum of 3s. per annum under the head of "deferred pay," which is given to him on his joining the army reserve, or on his discharge. If we turn now to the state of the active army in 1857, we find that at home, in India, and the Colonies, there are 155,000 effectives, and 78,000 in the army of reserves. Numbers alone, however, give no adequate idea of the efficiency of an army for field service, and without realizing that our arrangements are yet perfect, for, indeed, there remains much to be done, yet it may be confidently asserted that the departments of the auxiliary branches, which include, besides, and transport the army, and are therefore essential for its well-being in the field, have never previously been so efficient as a state.

The growth of our innumerable minor wars have made the army known to the tax-payers, and the War Office has thus been enabled to organize a campaign system, which has replaced the hands-on fashion prevailing sixty years ago.

EVELYN WOOD, V. C., O. C. B.

A CHARGE.

(For the Dispatch.)

My FIRST in these previous days

Like this on human ear,

In Palestine its old-time wife,

No palace could refuse.

"It is my SECOND"—never word

Like this on human ear,

With such control power was heard

To dissipate all fear.

My THIRD is a vessel, carrying no

Salt or steam or car,

But borne full on ocean's wave

To transatlantic shore.

An untold wealth of literature

Of science, art, and lore,

The garnered hoard of all the years

My WHOLE preserves in stores.

\$100 Reward, \$100.

The readers of this paper will be pleased

to learn that there is at least one dread-

ed disease that science has been able to

cure now known to the medical fraternity.

Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and forcing the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers, that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of testimonials. Address: F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O. Sold by Druggists—50 cents.

Hall's Family Pills are the best.

THE NORTHERN NECK.

LOOKING OVER MATERIAL FOR

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Names That Have Been Mentioned—

The Laboring-People Are Impa-

tient—Disappointments of the Mc-

Kinley Administration—Surgeon.

(Correspondence of the Dispatch.)

COMORN, KING GEORGE COUNTY,

V.A., June 4.—The Northern Neck people

are beginning to look carefully over their

"large and well-selected stock," in

search of suitable material for legisla-

tive candidates the coming fall, and al-

ready a number of good names have

been suggested in connection with the

Democratic nominations in the several

counties. Mr. C. Harding Walker, of

Heathsville, will be asked to accept the

Democratic nomination for the House

District, composed of the counties

of Westmoreland and Northumberland.

Richmond will probably have the honor

this year of furnishing the candidate for

that county and Lancaster, and among the

good men spoken of for the place is Mr.

W. V. Mergan, of the Northern Neck

News, published at Warsaw. If King

George furnishes the Democratic candi-

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wealth's Attorney Thomas H. Bevan will

be asked to accept the nomination. Not

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intimated the slightest desire for a nomina-

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Dr. G. M. Wallace, of Stafford, will

almost certainly receive the Demo-

cratic nomination for the State

Senate in the district embracing

Stafford, and his nomination will be

almost equivalent to his election, for

he is a pure man, and his popularity is

almost unbounded.

While the Democrats are thus duly and

judiciously "picking over" their material,

the Republicans are by no means

indifferent on the subject of putting their

best men in the field, and it will be seen

little later that they will select some

strong men for their candidates. It is

not improbable that one of the Republi-

can nominees in the Neck this year will

be a man for years prominent in the

Democratic ranks—a man more than one

trusted and honored by the Democratic

party.

ARE IMPATIENT.

Many of the laboring people who were

last fall out of employment and out of

money, and who supported the Republi-

can ticket because they were taught to

believe that the "hard times" and terri-

ble depression in business would give

place to "good times," plenty, and pros-

perity, immediately after the reins of

government were turned over to Hanna

& Co., are becoming exceedingly im-

patient and discontented under the con-

tinuation of depression and shivering

poverty among the poor. "Over half a

year since McKinley's election," say

some, "and yet times are no better. Here

we are still without regular work, and

money, and without nearly every-

thing, and the worst of it is there is

nothing in sight but promises of better

times." The true condition of a large

portion of the laboring people, and the

poor generally, of the rural districts, at

this time is really the most serious question of the day, and if accurately described, would hardly be believed by the more favored and those not in a position to know. The farmer and country merchant, upon whom that class have always depended, and who no longer in a position, or condition, to help them. The former, because of the low prices of his produce and his consequently crippled resources, cannot now employ labor, as formerly. The latter, because of the farmer's inability to patronize him, and because of alien-off trade and greatly reduced business, cannot now, as of yore, supply the laborer who is out of work, and with no prospect of work. So, the laborer, without nearly every thing, and the worst of it is there is nothing in sight but promises of better times. The true condition of a large portion of the laboring people, and the poor generally, of the rural districts, at this time is really the most serious question of the day, and if accurately described, would hardly be believed by the more favored and those not in a position to know. The farmer and country merchant, upon whom that class have always depended, and who no longer in a position, or condition, to help them. The former, because of the low prices of his produce and his consequently crippled resources, cannot now employ labor, as formerly. The latter, because of the farmer's inability to patronize him, and because of alien-off trade and greatly reduced business, cannot now, as of yore, supply the laborer who is out of work, and with no prospect of work. So, the laborer, without nearly every thing, and the worst of it is there is nothing in sight but promises of better times.

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